

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1693, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

MODIFICATION OF CERTAIN DEADLINES FOR COMMISSION ON COMBATING SYNTHETIC OPIOID TRAFFICKING

Ms. WILD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4981) to amend the Fentanyl Sanctions Act, to modify certain deadlines relating to the Commission on Combating Synthetic Opioid Trafficking.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4981

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. MODIFICATION OF CERTAIN DEADLINES FOR COMMISSION ON COMBATING SYNTHETIC OPIOID TRAFFICKING.

Section 7221(f)(2) of the Fentanyl Sanctions Act (133 Stat. 2273) is amended by striking “270 days” and inserting “390 days”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Ms. WILD) and the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. KIM) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WILD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 4981.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Ms. WILD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4981, a bill to modify certain deadlines relating to the Commission on Combating Synthetic Opioid Trafficking.

I want to thank my colleague and friend, Mr. TRONE from Maryland, for authoring this bipartisan bill. Mr. TRONE has been an invaluable voice in Congress for combating our country's opioid crisis. Far too many families in my community, Pennsylvania's greater Lehigh Valley, have endured indescribable heartbreak and loss as a result of this crisis.

When I first started serving in Congress back in 2018, I made a solemn commitment that I would do everything within my power to end the devastation of the opioid crisis once and for all. I am dedicated to keeping that promise.

Earlier this year, I was proud to see Mr. TRONE elected as Democratic co-chairman of the Commission on Combating Synthetic Opioid Trafficking. Mr. TRONE, working alongside his co-chair, Senator TOM COTTON, in a bipartisan manner is developing a strategic approach to combat the flow of synthetic opioids into the United States.

Last year, the Centers for Disease Control released data indicating that the surge in overdose deaths from 2018 to 2019 was the greatest year-over-year increase. Tragically, far too many Americans have witnessed the horrific effects of this opioid crisis.

Just as we must also take on the greed of the pharmaceutical industry—which has done a great deal to lead us to this point domestically when it comes to the opioid crisis writ large—most of the fentanyl consumed in the United States is manufactured outside of the country, so it is crucial that we engage closely with our international partners to address this scourge. The Commission on Combating Synthetic Opioid Trafficking aims to do just that.

Synthetic drugs, unlike plant-based drugs such as cocaine or heroin, are not limited by climate-growing restrictions. Any country can produce synthetic drugs, and according to a January 2020 Drug Enforcement Administration report, this may lead to a rapidly diversifying list of synthetic drug-producing countries and suppliers.

With such an imposing task ahead of us, strong, bipartisan cooperation is critical. We must work together to do what is right and find a solution that can help save countless American lives.

This bill will amend the Fentanyl Sanctions Act to extend the amount of time granted to the Commission on Combating Synthetic Opioid Trafficking. The commission was originally slated to start in 2020 but could not get underway until March of this year. It is incumbent upon us to do everything we can to get this right.

I thank Mr. TRONE again for being a strong champion for bipartisan collaboration in the fight against opioid abuse.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1330

Mrs. KIM of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of the bill to amend the Fentanyl Sanctions Act. Across our Nation, Americans are increasingly becoming exposed to the impact of the illicit distribution of fentanyl. Our local news is reporting on another overdose caused by a lethal dose of illicit fentanyl with increased frequency.

This synthetic opioid is making its toxic presence known in our communities.

Fentanyl is similar to morphine but almost 100 times more potent. It is manufactured at a low cost in labs overseas, primarily in China. It is then smuggled into the United States through Mexico.

In cases of overdose, the individual is not aware that it contains a lethal dose until it is too late.

This body recognizes that the People's Republic of China is failing to effectively regulate and implement illicit trafficking of fentanyl.

In December 2019, we called for the establishment of the Commission on Combating Synthetic Opioid Trafficking. Specifically, this Commission was designed to work with the executive branch in developing a consensus on a strategic approach to combating the flow of synthetic opioids into the United States.

The underlying bill recognizes the importance of this Commission and the work that is still needed.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WILD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. TRONE), the author of this bill and a champion in combating the opioid crisis.

Mr. TRONE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairwoman WILD very much for her kind words.

I rise today to urge my colleagues to pass my bill to extend the work of the National Commission on Combating Synthetic Opioid Trafficking so, together, we can complete the Commission's important work in a timely manner.

As many of you know, my mission in Congress is to end the opioid epidemic in this country. This bipartisan Commission will help us do just that.

Thanks to the leadership of Senate Majority Leader CHUCK SCHUMER and our former congressional colleague, Max Rose, this bipartisan Commission was established by the National Defense Authorization Act of 2020. I was honored that Speaker NANCY PELOSI appointed me to the Commission, and that my colleagues on the Commission voted to elect me co-chair, along with Senator TOM COTTON.

The goal of the Commission is to develop a strategic approach to combating the flow of synthetic opioids into the United States, but my goal for the Commission is much more simple. It is simply to save lives—save lives, period.

Last year, we saw more than 93,000 people die of a drug overdose in this country. We set a new record, a record we never wanted to set. In Maryland alone, we lost nearly 2,500 to opioids.

After we made progress in the fight against overdoses in 2019, the numbers are continuing to rise due to the pandemic. As overdoses continue to rise in communities across the country, we have our work cut out for us in this

fight against synthetic drug trafficking.

Synthetic opioids such as fentanyl are among the deadliest illicit substances in the drug industry today. In my home State of Maryland, fentanyl was involved in 93 percent of all opioid deaths in 2020, and opioid-related deaths were up 46 percent in western Maryland in 2020, compared to the same time last year.

We need to act now if we are going to put an end to these senseless deaths, and we cannot do it alone. That is why I am so grateful for the work of the bipartisan Commission.

The Commission's membership includes the best of the best. From the administration, we have representatives from the Office of National Drug Control Policy, DEA, DHS, DOD, Treasury, State, and the Director of National Intelligence.

In Congress, Republican Congressman FRED UPTON and Democrat Senator ED MARKEY, two champions in the fight against addiction, are working alongside Senator COTTON and me.

We have a number of experts from outside government, including Karen Tandy, Sandy Winnefeld, and other distinguished individuals. We are grateful that Kemp Chester, from the Office of National Drug Control Policy, guides our work as executive director. We are lucky to have the expertise of the experts at RAND working to find solutions for this incredibly difficult challenge.

Due to the pandemic, we were not able to begin our work as soon as we would have liked. For that reason, we must pass this simple but crucial bill to extend the work of the Commission until February of next year.

This extension will allow us to continue our important work and produce a report with actionable steps that will combat the flow of synthetic opioids into our country and, most importantly, save lives.

I urge a "yes" vote.

Mrs. KIM of California. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WILD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, let me thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. TRONE) for the work that he is doing.

Having served on the Foreign Affairs Committee, and now serving on Judiciary as the chair of the Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security Subcommittee, I can affirmatively say that fentanyl kills. It kills people. It kills our children, our mothers, our fathers. It kills the family's infrastructure and system.

So let me just simply indicate that the idea of having an extension of the Commission on Combating Synthetic Opioid Trafficking to join in the thoughtful discussion of what we are attempting to do on drugs that kill.

We in the Judiciary Committee have been working and secured an extension

of fentanyl sanctions, and it was in acknowledgment that the community is suffering by the harmful effects of fentanyl abuse and usage. It was acknowledging that it is imperative that we find a thoughtful resolution to address the grave tragedies that plague communities like mine and those throughout the country.

Earlier, I mentioned names of individuals who were on the other side in terms of incarceration because of the imbalance in drug enforcement. But, again, we say that fentanyl kills.

Given the importance of getting this right, I am in support of extending the measure in Judiciary, but I am in support of having the opportunity for thoughtful discussion to deal with what our next steps are.

Any way that we can come together to address the loss of life and, of course, the acceptance that fentanyl kills, and other opioid substances as well, used and abused, then I can assure you that we are doing the right thing as Members of Congress.

Mrs. KIM of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, as noted, the battle we wage against the illicit distribution of fentanyl is ongoing. Extending the time allows the Commission to provide us a better understanding of the challenges we face and includes a strategy to address it. The valuable work of this Commission is critical to addressing this poison in our Nation.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. WILD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume for the purpose of closing.

According to the National Institutes of Health, in 2018, 128 people died each day from opioid overdoses. We must not lose sight of the devastating toll these drugs are taking on our country. We need to tackle the opioid crisis from every angle. I am hopeful that passing this bill will take us one step closer to ending this epidemic.

I again thank Mr. TRONE for authoring this important legislation. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4981, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. WILD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4981.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. CLYDE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

WAR CRIMES REWARDS EXPANSION ACT

Ms. WILD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill

(H.R. 4250) to amend the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 to provide for rewards for the arrest or conviction of certain foreign nationals who have committed genocide or war crimes, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4250

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "War Crimes Rewards Expansion Act".

SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF STATE REWARDS PROGRAM.

Paragraph (10) of section 36(b) of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2708(b)) is amended by striking "defined under the statute of such tribunal;" and inserting the following: "defined under—
“(A) the statute of such country or tribunal, as the case may be; or
“(B) United States law;”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. WILD) and the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. KIM) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WILD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 4250.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Ms. WILD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 4250, the War Crimes Rewards Expansion Act, authored by Representative Foxx.

The bill broadens the State Department rewards program for individuals or whistleblowers who come forward with and provide information on genocide or war crimes. It clarifies that the rewards can also be provided for prosecutions that fall under domestic law, including American law or the law of another nation, in addition to international law.

We have seen, time and again, that whistleblower programs are the most effective type of compliance mechanism, and the State Department rewards program itself is a proven tool for bringing the perpetrators of atrocities to justice.

The United States must continue to demonstrate that we are steadfast in our commitment to holding war criminals accountable and that the mechanisms we have in place to bring about their arrest are flexible and robust.

This bill is straightforward. By expanding the scope of what rewards can be paid for information, we will incentivize more individuals to come forward and gain more information with which to find and prosecute these criminals.

This legislation has passed the House in previous Congresses, and we hope